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WACO — THE SQUARE — ABOUT 1870

Photo property Mr. Winn Nichols

HIGHLIGHTS OF WACO HISTORY



By

ROGER NORMAN CONGER

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FOREWORD

IT WAS recently suggested that a need, or at least a place, existed for a concise, factual history of the City of Waco. Much such history of Waco and the adjacent region has been written previously by various students and devotees of the subject, but for some time no such work has been available for a general distribution.

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The earliest and perhaps best such history was published in 1876 as a part of the first Waco City Directory. This work was compiled by John Sleeper and Jere C. Hutchins.

In 1893 there was published a large quarto volume containing a thousand pages, entitled "A History of McLennan, Falls, Bell and Coryell Counties." Much of the Waco history contained in this book was taken from the earlier work, particularly that portion representing the memoirs of Major George B. Erath. The major portion of the thousand pages, however, consists of a collection of biographical sketches of promi-

nent citizens of the Counties named, the volume having been sold and distributed on a subscription basis, hence the name of "Mug Book" by which its type is irreverently known.

Both of these two first books have long been out of print, and belong to the realm of "collector's items" exclusively.

Professor Guy B. Harrison of Baylor University's History Department, and the late John K. Strecker of the Baylor University Library, both have made numerous valuable contributions to the subject. Mr. Strecker's Baylor Bulletin entitled "The Chronicles of George Barnard" is a treasury of Waco material, but it is also out of print and becoming rare.

The man possessing probably the greatest individual store of information on early Waco history was the late Judge W. M. Sleeper, who came to Waco as a boy with his father in 1868. In 1941, in collaboration with Judge Allan D. Sanford, he published an extremely interesting book entitled "Waco Bar and Incidents of Waco History," containing brief biographies of the members, past and present, of the Waco Bar Association. Somewhat earlier Dr. W. O. Wilkes of Waco published a similar history of the Waco Medical Association.

A charming book which touches closely on the subject is the little volume "A Texan In Search of a

Fight," by Judge John C. West. In it Judge West recounts his leaving from Waco for the field of Civil War in 1861, and his consequent adventures.

The many splendid histories of the State of Texas offer numerous references to the Waco region. The work of Yoakum gives the best coverage of the adventures of Philip Nolan and his death at or near Waco in the year 1801. J. W. Wilbarger's "Indian Depredations" is another interesting and valuable source book.

As regards biography, the life stories of several of Waco's early pioneers contain so much of interest as to seem to require some special, more extended treatment, and for this purpose a biographical chapter has been appended at the end of the work. Many more than the four biographies might justifiably have been included. Sincere appreciation is here expressed to Judge Allan D. Sanford of Waco for his constant encouragement and learned assistance.

The writer approaches the subject of Waco history with deep humility, but moved by a sense of keenest interest, having listened since early childhood to the tales and stories of "old-timers" of the community. As a small boy he attended the Old Settlers' Reunions at Cameron Park, with his father, and heard the gems of oratory, and the classic fiddle scraping executed by "Old Uncle Dan McLennan," the freed slave. The

“old-timers” are fast passing on, and many a narrative will never be recorded. Today’s Waco is a city one may well be proud of, but prouder should all Wacoans be of the builders of our city. The story is one of great people in great times.

ROGER NORMAN CONGER.

Waco, Texas, 1945

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PRE-HISTORY WACO BEFORE THE WHITE MAN CAME

I

THE study of a people before the advent of any written history is known as archeology. The archeology of Waco and its vicinity has revealed that it has supported an aboriginal population, time out of mind. The best known evidence of such a habitation is indicated by the multitudes of arrowheads of flint, picked up to this day along the Brazos or the Bosque.

The waterways of this country were always the preferred locations for the towns and villages of the Indians, and the location at Waco was ideal. Finest fish and game of every kind were plentiful, and forests of pecan, oak and mesquite all added to the ancient bill-of-fare. More important still were the springs of crystal water gushing forth their refreshing fountain at the site of the Waco village. An early writer has

said of the Waco Indians that they had an "almost superstitious veneration for the big spring on the Brazos, and had a legend that as long as they drank of its waters their tribe would flourish and never become extinct."

The Indians occupying this location at the time of the earliest white contact were given the identifying name, supplied by themselves, of "Wacos"—a name given many forms of spelling by the various writers of an earlier day. Near the Waco village to the eastward resided the minor tribe known as the Tehuacanas, and a short distance to the southwest lived the Tonkawa tribe. The Wacos and Tehuacanas were both members of what ethnologists have termed the Caddoan Confederacy, a sort of distant kinship. They remained at peace with one another, and banded together in mutual defense against the fierce Comanches, Kiowas and Apaches who lived farther westward, but who were well-nigh perpetually "on the warpath."

While the Wacos obtained their living principally from the chase, by hunting and fishing, they also cultivated small patches of corn and garden, and lived in comparatively permanent dwellings built of poles and thatch. Archeologists have found that the prehistoric residents of the Waco site were rather high in the comparative scale of Indian culture. They were fine artisans in flint and stone and bone and left these

ornaments and weapons in quantities around their villages and in the burials of their dead.

The Wacos themselves were much more aggressive and warlike than their Tehuacana and Tonkawa neighbors, and in the days of the pioneer settlements they contributed their own share of theft and murder. It might be stated here as interest that some archeologists have attempted to prove that the neighboring Tonkawa tribe was cannibalistic, basing this supposition upon the findings of human bones in and around the Tonkawa fire places. Further research has developed that this practice was confined largely to a special rite of a superstitious nature. The Tonkawas hated and feared the cruel Comanches, and when a Comanche warrior fell into their hands in battle the Tonkawas occasionally prepared and ate the hated enemy's *heart*, in the hope and belief that the aggressive qualities of its former owner might be transmitted into themselves: a grim and early "blood transfusion."

The food of the Waco Indians consisted largely of the flesh of the deer and buffalo, both of which roamed the region in almost unbelievable abundance. Turkey and numerous smaller birds and animals supplemented the fare, with plentiful fish, acorns, nuts and mesquite beans. Commerce with other tribes and with the Spaniards brought to the Waco village its fields of melons, pumpkins, lima beans and corn.

It is true that their existence was simple and without restraint, living their stone-age lives with no ideas of the vast events taking form across the seas. In all the centuries of their residence they had not been able to progress or raise themselves above the culture level of the savage. It was inevitable that this "ancient solitary reign" make way before the westward progress of the white man and his civilization.

EXPLORATION OF THE WACO REGION

II

IN 1941 Dr. Robert C. Hill, the late "dean" of Texas geologists, and a prominent historian as well, made a very interesting declaration concerning Waco, that it is the oldest city in America. Dr. Hill based his claim upon the finding in the writings of a Spanish explorer, Moscoso, the mention of an Indian village—in just about this locality—called by the natives "Guasco," which was visited by Moscoso's expedition in the year 1541. Dr. Hill was satisfied from the geographical description by the Spaniards that this village they called "Guasco" actually was the site of the big spring on the Brazos, and as there is no letter W in the Spanish language, "Guasco" was the manner in which quite naturally these explorers could record the name as told them by the Indian residents of the village. Dr. Hill's assertion is of interest, but

it is unlikely that the habitation of the Waco village actually was of greater antiquity than numerous other aboriginal sites in North and South America.

The streams and prairies of Texas, including the Waco village, saw many expeditions by the roving Spaniards and their religious representatives during the busy gainful years and centuries of Spanish occupation of the American Southwest. The bearers of the standard of Spain were both ambitious and consecrated—they were zealous in their mines but likewise in their missions. Records indicate that the Wacos did not take kindly the advances of the Spaniards, and harried their expeditions, forts, and missions on several different occasions. The Wacos from the village at the big spring, and kinsmen from another Waco village farther up the Brazos, were participants in the destruction in 1749 of the Spanish Fort at Taovaya on Red River, now Montague County. They were also party to an Indian assault at near that same time upon the Spanish Mission of San Saba, near the present city of Menard.

It was just at the turn of the nineteenth century, early in the year 1801, that the village of the Wacos was chanced upon by a bold party from the young Union in the East. This visit was marked, however, by an occurrence, a death, which was to be of much significance a few years later. An adventurous young

Irishman named Philip Nolan had been engaged since 1785 in an illegal mercantile trade plying between Natchez and the Spanish hamlet of San Antonio de Bexar. In October 1800 he started on another trip into Texas with a company of twenty men, including a Negro called Caesar. This expedition was supposedly to capture mustang ponies on the Texas plains for sale to the Spanish militia in Louisiana, and Philip Nolan carried an official letter of permit from the Spanish Governor of New Orleans. It happened however, that about this time there existed much difference of opinion and tangling up of authority among the various Spanish foreign offices, and the Governor of the neighboring province of Chihuahua had sent several bodies of mounted troops into Texas with orders to capture or drive out any intruders found coming in from the United States. Salcedo, the Chihuahua Governor, was suspicious of the purposes of such intruders, and afraid that they were likely to be intent upon arousing the Texas Indians against their Spanish overlords, or actually making territorial war.

It was early in the morning of March 22nd, 1801, that a body of two hundred Spaniards came upon Philip Nolan's horse-hunting camp on the Brazos River. Edward Everett Hale, who studied widely concerning Philip Nolan, states definitely that this camp

was situated at the Waco village. Others have located it elsewhere*—in Johnson County, or in Bell County—but Dr. Hale's studies lend authority to his assertion.

Nolan and his men were all in camp, and upon discovering the approaching militia they retired into a sort of log enclosure which the knowing leader had set up for such an emergency. But the Spaniards had with them "a small swivel cannon" carried on mule-back, and within ten minutes after the fracas started Philip Nolan was struck dead by a ball from this cannon. By a little after noon, with several more men wounded, the Americans capitulated to the overwhelming force of Spaniards, and were marched with much unseemly cruelty to San Antonio and later across the Rio Grande. There all were imprisoned for a long time, and some were executed.

The news of the Philip Nolan affair spread back across the Mississippi, and proved later to be a potent factor in the kindling of the fires of American resentment against the Spanish in the Southwest.

During the historic years of American colonization in Texas the Waco Indians grew increasingly aggressive. As stated previously they were a people of comparatively good intelligence and like other, larger In-

**Editor's Note:* In light of most recent research, the best case seems to be for Blum, in Hill County.

dian tribes of the western country they could not help but see the menace to their ancestral domain represented in the steady advance of the white frontier. They rode constantly on horse-stealing raids against the settlements, and were accused of occasional murders of white wayfarers. In the correspondence papers of Stephen F. Austin, collected by Dr. Eugene C. Barker of Texas University, has been located a letter of so much interest and color as to deserve to be printed here in full.

Letter from Thomas M. Duke to Stephen F. Austin.

Waco Village, June 1824

Col. Stephen F. Austin

Dear Sir:

This will be handed you by Mr. Beard who is going down as an express. We arrived here a few days ago and met with five of their nation in the Village. They appeared very friendly toward us, the rest being out on war parties against the Osages, and Buffalo hunting. Yesterday say ten or fifteen families came in and we had a talk with them; they denied positively the murder of Tumlinson and likewise the stealing of any horses from the Americans or any knowledge of those that had committed those outrages and from their conduct appear to be friendly disposed toward us. We have seen one sorrel mare mule marked with the brand

that you requested us to inquire after, but have not as yet made a demand for it, being in hopes that we may see some more that have been stolen. A few minutes ago Wacos came in and informed us that Towaas Indians had started with a party that half were to go against the Spaniards and the other against the Americans. They told us in the council that the Towaas Indians were enemies of ours and wished them to go to war against us, but that they would not consent to it. The Towaas live somewhere toward the head of this river, about six days travel from here. We have consulted among ourselves and think that if you approve of it that now would be a fit time for us to make a campaign against them, as we have a faithful Chickasaw Indian with us who could pilot us to the Towaash town and now is the time to strike a decisive blow as we can keep in secret with the Wacos and will be certain to find a part of them in their own towns where we may be able to destroy their corn, etc. We have acted pretty independently since we have been here and I am certain that a campaign would make (them) take care how they tamper with the Americans. We shall wait here fifteen or twenty days for men to come in and in case we start before you come on we have preconcerted signals and marks with Beard who will know them. This town is situated on the west bank of the river about half a mile from the river. They have a spring almost as cold as ice itself.

All we want is some brandy and sugar to have ice toddy. They have about 400 acres planted in corn, beans, pumpkins and melons and that tended in good order. I think they cannot raise more than 100 warriors. One of the Towackanaw towns is about three miles below this on the opposite side of them consisting of seven houses. Their principal town is some distance from this on the waters of the Trinity. For any particulars inquire of Mr. Beard.

THOS. M. DUKE

Later in the eighteen-twenties the Wacos received an all but mortal blow from another body of their own kind, a large band of Eastern Cherokees with some allies who moved into the Waco region ahead of the white frontier, bringing Negro slaves, considerable other property, and a rather civilized form of agriculture. While they chose to pitch their settlement on the East bank of the Brazos, opposite the big spring, they set upon the Wacos fiercely, and within just a few months had succeeded in driving them entirely away to the westward. These Cherokees took up their farming in the fertile Brazos valley, but maintained a jealous watch over the Waco spring, and sniped constantly at any stray parties of Indians or whites who chanced to stop there for refreshment.

By the year 1830 the farthest white settlement up the Brazos was at the famous falls, about fifty miles

below the Waco village. This was the only good ford across the big river, and for some time there had been two neighboring settlements located there, one named Viesca and the other bearing the colorful name of Bucksnot.

In 1836 the residents of Texas wrested their independence from the Mexicans, and soon thereafter set about policing and expanding their settlements and outposts, which had suffered bitter attacks from the Indian tribes during the revolutionary struggle. Early in the year 1837 occurred another incident of particular importance to the future of the unborn Waco. The Texan Secretary of War ordered a Company of the newly organized Ranger Battalion, from the settlements at the falls, to proceed to the site of the old Waco village and establish a fort. This was promptly done, it requiring three weeks time, however, for the Rangers to make the short move up to Waco with their equipment. They had to cut a road and to "build a bridge over Cow Bayou." The new outpost was named Fort Fisher, and let the reader mark well the names of two of the Ranger officers among the company. The Captain was Thomas H. Barron and a subaltern officer was named George B. Erath. The latter must be called, in the popular phrase, the "father of Waco."

The Rangers speedily set up barracks near the

spring, but the new fort was doomed to a brief existence. Inside just a few weeks time orders were received from the war office to abandon the post and return to the falls, as Fort Fisher was "too far out from the settlements to do the type of service needed." But George B. Erath, Barron and others had seen the beauty of the Bosque Valley, and to it had determined some day to return.

About this time a force of Texas militia under Generals Rusk and Burleson were ordered against the arrogant and troublesome Cherokees and their confederates on the east bank of the Brazos, and without much bloodshed the Texans succeeded in driving the Indians out of their settlement there and farther on into the West.

A short distance down the Brazos below the falls was situated a prosperous colony named Nashville. It was founded by a body of settlers from Tennessee in 1833, under permit from the Mexican government, and its leader or "empresario" was Sterling C. Robertson.

In 1839 another band of Americans arrived at Nashville to take up residence in the new Republic, and among this company appears the name of another man all Wacoans should well remember, for he was destined to be a principal figure at her birth. This man was Shapley P. Ross, and with him were his

young sons, Lawrence Sullivan (Sul) and Peter F. Ross, both of whom were also destined to play large parts in the early days of Waco's history.

The Waco Indians' day was almost done by now, and as the "westward course of empire took its way" the time was drawing near for the beginning of the new Waco, a white man's village.

THE BIRTH OF THE CITY

III

“**F**IRSTS” in anything are of interest, and particularly in the field of history. Americans have always been extremely conscious and proud of their pioneers, discoverers and builders. We shall attempt to catalog herein the “firsts” of the Waco region.

The first white settlements in the vicinity came in the year 1844, when a remarkable young Connecticut yankee named George Barnard came up the Brazos and established an Indian trading post in the bottoms of Tehuacana Creek, about eight miles south of the Waco Spring. The trading house was erected on a bluff on the bank of a small stream known still as Trading House Creek.

Barnard was only twenty-six years old at this time, but had already had six years of rigorous adventures

in the new Republic. The year prior to the opening of the new trading post he had made a horseback trip through the Waco region with Thomas Torrey of Houston, a member of the firm of Torrey Brothers, prominently engaged in the frontier trading post business. This survey trip had been marked by tragedy, as young Torrey had fallen "ill of a fever" and died just below Waco village. But Barnard had marked the spot for the new post, near the outskirts of then Robertson County, and in 1844 he freighted in a stock of goods and "set up shop." He had been associated with the Torreys already in the operation of an earlier post on the Navasota River (or Navasot as it was then known) and he referred to the new store as post number two.

The operations of the post on the Tehuacana were successful, under George Barnard's able management. His record books are now preserved at Baylor University, and their neatly ordered pages tell a fascinating story. As might be expected the principal item of barter brought to the store was hides, "dressed and undressed," of deer, bear, raccoon, fox, beaver, bobcat and panther. The hides were sorted, packed up into bales and freighted to Houston by ox wagon. Barnard's principal freighter was a man named L. H. Williams and his rate was \$2.00 per hundred pounds.

Deer skins brought (in trade) twelve to seventeen

cents each, and they constituted the biggest item of barter. Between 1844 and 1853 Barnard handled about seventy-five thousand of them.

Buffalo hides, or robes as they were known, were also plentiful, and brought from \$2.00 to \$5.00 each, depending on size and quality. The bear of the Waco region was the small black variety, but they were very abundant. It is interesting to know that there were also numerous beaver in this community, though of a smaller variety than the northern beaver, and with poorer fur.

Barnard's stock of trade goods included just about everything his Indian customers might need or desire, with heavy supplies of gunpowder, lead, bullet moulds, and pipe hatchets for the men; and colored beads, dress combs and refined bear's oil for the women. Tobacco was in heavy demand, and Barnard's sales record also an occasional "gallon of whiskey."

In 1846 a considerable band of the Cherokees had dared to return to their clearings across the Brazos from the Waco spring, but fully chastened they set up their camp in an entirely peaceful manner, and set about participating in the trading at Barnard's store. Some Delawares had also come into the region, along with several other small tribes of Indians who had been forced westward by the advance of the white frontier. Barnard's establishment flourished and in

1848 he bought out from the Torrey brothers their interest in the store for \$9500.00, which was about half the invoice valuation of the stock.

After the Rangers had abandoned the new Fort Fisher in 1837 and returned to the settlements at the falls, George B. Erath had resided part of the time at the Nashville colony and engaged in a considerable amount of surveying. In the year 1839 he again accompanied a party of horse hunters up the Brazos, and it was during this trip that Erath was persuaded by another member of the party to survey several tracts of land on the south fork of the Bosque. The name of this friend was Neill McLennan, Sr. McLennan had always been one of the most fearless and resolute of frontiersmen, and Erath told later that McLennan had become so struck by the beauty and promise of the Bosque valley he had declared at once his determination to pull up his stakes and move up there from Nashville. Various factors entered in to delay somewhat the fulfillment of this plan, but in the year 1845, after George Barnard's trading house had further attracted attention to the Waco region, Neill McLennan did what he had promised and moved up the Brazos to the mouth of the Bosque, and on up that river to the land of his earlier selection on the South Bosque. On a nearby creek a drove of wild

javalina hogs was seen one day, and the stream was henceforth known as Hog Creek.

Wild turkeys roamed the Bosque and Brazos bottoms in great droves and were popular as food, only the breast being eaten as it was considered too troublesome to prepare the smaller portions.

In 1846 the attractive features of McLennan's homestead drew several other families of his relatives and friends to move up the river and settle near him. In that same year a man named Jesse Sutton built a crude blacksmith shop near the Cherokee camp on the east side of the Brazos, on land now occupied by East Waco, and as Sutton both lived and worked in this modest establishment he must rightfully be given the distinction of having been Waco's very first business firm. During 1847 and 1848 quite a number of additional families moved onto land in or near East Waco, and by 1849 it had begun to assume the appearance of a village.

It must not be assumed that all this land was free to be taken for the asking, for both the Mexican and Texan governments had dealt most liberally in the practice of granting titles to large tracts of land to various persons, and the attractive Waco region had its full share of these grants. The principal one of these, lying on the west side of the Brazos and including the springs, was dated 1832 and held by a General

Thomas Jefferson Chambers. A total of nine others near the Chambers grant had been issued in 1833, 1834, and 1835, and the names of the Mexican claimants are familiar today in real estate and legal circles: Tomas de La Vega, Manchaca, Sanchez, Rabajo, O'Campo, Aguirre, Martinez, Moreno and Galindo.

During 1848 General Chambers had sold his grant to a Mr. J. S. Sydnor at Galveston, and Sydnor had decided to enter into a deal with a well known Texas land agent named Jacob de Cordova, to cut up the Chambers grant and sell it off at a flat \$1.00 per acre. The hand of destiny may now be seen again, because it happened that one of the principal surveyors retained by de Cordova was George B. Erath. Erath had viewed and explored the Waco region thoroughly and upon being advised of the plans of Sydnor and de Cordova he quickly set about urging them to locate a town site on the Chambers grant at the big Waco spring. They were quick to see the possibilities of such a venture and immediately commissioned Erath to come to the Chambers grant and make a preliminary survey. Erath did this in May, 1848, but advised that "owing to a cloud on the title, the grant be officially relocated with certificates to perfect the title." This required the passing of several months.

During this time Mr. Sydnor passed out of the picture by selling out the grant to two other residents of

State of Texas
County of Milam

This is to certify that Capt S. P. Ross
deceased for 2 lots at the ware village
situated to him by J. D. Cordova's exec.
Soney bottles in consideration of establishing
a ferry and first settling in said town
lot No 1 in the fractional place below
ferry plank fronting the bridge 50 feet
front 165 feet deep and lot No 2
loc 24 or D fronting Washington street 50
feet front 165 feet deep he also bought of
J. B. Cruth agent for Cordova lot No 2
loc 24 or D fronting Washington street and
50 feet front 165 feet deep for the consideration
~~of five dollars and no more~~
and Soney bottles bind themselves their
heirs and assigns to said Ross his heirs
and assigns to make a good and
sufficient bill for said lot on final
payment of the consideration of the sum
of fifty dollars well and truly
to be paid Waco value March 6 1849
J. D. Cordova for
himself and as attorney
~~of said deceased~~
J. B. Cruth

FIRST LOT SALE IN WACO; MARCH 6, 1849.

Galveston named Jonas Butler and N. A. Ware, who took in Jacob de Cordova with them as an equal partner in the venture. A discussion had been had as to what they should call the new town and the property owners had agreed upon the picturesque name of Lamartine; but surveyor Erath had other ideas. He stood up firmly for the name of Waco Village, and he later wrote that it was on May 5th, 1849, that this name was mutually accepted.

With the title perfected and other preliminaries completed, Erath and de Cordova returned to the townsite and it was on March 1st, 1849, that surveyor Erath "ran out" Block Number One of the new town, and divided it into lots for sale to the group eagerly awaiting the proceedings. The town square was laid off, and the main street run on out as far as Fifth.

The lots on both sides of the street were sold for \$5.00 per lot, with those around the square held at \$10.00 each. Westward from Fifth Street, and to the north and south, "farming lots" were laid off to be sold at \$2.00 to \$3.00 per acre. The developers of the townsite undoubtedly considered this a very attractive piece of business, as compared to the original plan to sell all the land at \$1.00 per acre.

Also present among the group of buyers was Captain Shapley P. Ross. Jacob de Cordova was a clever operator and when the plans for the new town began

to take form he had visited with Captain Ross on bivouac near Cameron, to offer the already distinguished Texan certain attractive inducements to move his home and family to the new village on the Brazos. These inducements included the concession of conducting a ferryboat service across the river, four free lots of Ross' own selection, and the privilege of buying eighty acres of farming lots at the reduced price of \$1.00 per acre. Captain Ross accepted the offer in its entirety, selected his four lots and eighty acres the first day, and even purchased an additional 200 acres at \$2.50 an acre to demonstrate his confidence in the new village. The future life and career of Shapley P. Ross as a citizen of Waco well justified the wisdom of the offer made to him by de Cordova. Ross promptly set about construction of his ferry across the sandy Brazos and from the very first it was a most profitable venture. As there was not another decent crossing to be found north of the falls at Viesca and Bucksnot, the Waco ferry soon made the new Village the leading thoroughfare for parties bound for the new country to the westward. This traffic was extremely profitable to the sellers of provisions and supplies at Waco.

George Barnard had lost no time in getting his new store opened in the Village. His record books list the names of almost every pioneer in the community among his customers, and while credit was issued

freely it is pleasing to note that there were few delinquencies. Barnard often charged goods to men without even learning their initials, but they always paid him.

Another mercantile store was opened at this time by C. M. Hubby. Dr. J. H. Mullens opened a drug store, and a frame hotel went up across the street from Barnard's trading post. The hotel was erected by the firm of Burney and Blair, but shortly after its erection its operation was taken over by Captain Ross. The versatile Captain was also designated as the town's first official postmaster, and it is humorously told that he used his hat as the postoffice. He liked to wear one of the tall-crowned silk or beaver hats known in those days as a "bee-gum" hat, and he would often carry letters around the streets under the crown of his tall hat, and deliver them to their addressees as he would meet them in person. The family of Captain Ross earned yet another distinction in 1852, when there was born to them a daughter, Kate Ross, the first white child born in the new Village.

Another splendid man who had been attracted to the new Village, even before the laying out of the townsite, was Captain Thomas H. (or Tommy) Barron, the same who had commanded the Ranger Company at the time of the short lived founding of Fort Fisher at the Waco Spring in 1837.

Captain Barron had selected his homesite on a small branch several hundred yards north of the big spring, and entered at once into an important place in the civic life of the Village.

The early vision of George B. Erath had now become a reality. The little frontier town of Waco Village was indeed launched forth upon a future of highest promise.

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YEARS OF VIGOR

IV

THE history of the youth and development of Waco runs parallel to that of all of Texas and of most of the West—founded in strength and character, hopes and ideals, but marked with the color of the frontier. Generally speaking the conquest of the American frontiers and the settling up of the early towns was accomplished by people of a strong character and disposition. These were the sort who had the courage and inclination to face the obstacles and discomforts of frontier existence. But the outposts of the frontier drew also another type of citizenry—men “outside the law”—fugitives from justice in older communities, seeking obscurity and a new life in the turbulent tide of the new states and territories.

Waco Village drew the usual share from all the elements of the frontier society, but it may be claimed in truth that the young city was marked from its earli-

est beginning by an unusual depth of character and culture.

In the city of Austin, by an Act of the Texas Legislature in 1850, the County of McLennan was created out of portions of the two rambling Counties of Robertson and Milam. This same Act set up a commission to locate the County seat of the new County, and for this commission were selected Neill McLennan, Sr., Shapley P. Ross, Lee R. Davis, N. F. Puckett, David Landon and Claiborne Varner. There was some consideration given to the town of Bosqueville, but the people generally seemed to favor Waco, and George B. Erath sent to State Representative George E. Burney a suggested plat of the new County so laid off as to situate Waco very near its center.

De Cordova and his partners in the Waco townsite also came forward at this time with an attractive offer of free lots for all necessary public purposes, streets and alleyways, ten feet of commons around the big spring and a share of ten per cent of the return on all the lots remaining to be sold. They inserted in their liberal offer one interesting reservation, it being that the donation remain in force only so long as the County seat remained at Waco. The commission accepted this proposition at once, and on June 10th, 1850, the deed to the County from the land owners was drawn up and recorded.

With matters of legal nature accumulating it became necessary to proceed quickly with organization of a court of some kind, and on September 2nd, 1850, there was called to order in Waco Village the first Commissioners' Court. John T. Eubank presided as Chief Justice, J. O. Illingsworth as Clerk, Robert Hulme as Sheriff, and Neill McLennan, Sr., Lee R. Davis, Jackson Puckett and John Blair the Commissioners present. At this historic session it was decided to lay the new County off into three precincts, and set up regular elections for the Commissioners. Committees were named to commence plans for roads to Nolanville and to Waxahachie, and three weeks later bids were ordered for a Court House "thirty feet square and one and one-half stories high." The bid was awarded to John S. Blair for the sum of \$500.00, and within due time the structure was properly erected.

As there was a statutory requirement in that day that a district court be held semi-annually in each County, on April 14th, 1851, the elected District Judge and District Attorney came to Waco to convene this Court. The District Judge presiding over this Court was Hon. R. E. B. Baylor, whose distinguished career is well known throughout Texas. He was a lawyer and judge of strong character and high principles, and in addition he was an ordained minister of the Baptist church. From his home near the old town

of Independence he had worked long and ardently for the improvement of the State's educational system, and was instrumental in establishing the University which bears his name.

J. H. Crosby was the District Attorney, and Capt. Thomas H. Barron served as Clerk. The lawyers enrolled were N. W. Battle, Richard Coke, J. W. Nowlin, Asa and James Willie, J. D. and D. C. Giddings, and a Mr. Barber. Several of these men attained very eminent positions in the later life of the City and the State.

N. W. Battle was a young Georgian, of splendid education, who had come to Waco in 1850 and opened a private school in a small house near the banks of the Brazos, just north of Washington Street. When Judge Baylor arrived to convene his Court there was no building available for the purpose, and Battle, who was also a lawyer, volunteered to dismiss his little class and furnish his schoolroom for the Court. This generous offer was accepted, and the school room was thus used until 1854, when more suitable quarters were provided.

Richard Coke, who was associated with J. W. Nowlin as Coke & Nowlin, had also come to Waco in the year 1850 from Virginia. Having landed at Houston he had proceeded to Waco on horseback. His legal practice, as well as his civic and social life,

were always prominent in the Waco community. Later on Coke became District Judge, then Governor of Texas, and United States Senator. He died in 1897 at his farm home near Waco, and his final resting place in old Oakwood Cemetery is still of peculiar interest. A lifelong friend was Dr. D. R. Wallace, and to this day, high on pedestals above their graves, stand life-like statues of the two friends, facing each other across a lovely sward of grass and flowers.

By the year 1854 the town had filled up rapidly, and while Courts had been convening in Waco since 1850 there was still no public jail. In most of the Texas of that day the celebrated "Judge Colt" was still held to be principal arbiter on points of really serious dispute. Waco, however, was determined to make at least an earnest effort to supplant the more popular rope and revolver with the dignity of law and order, and the County Commissioners invited bids for the construction of a suitable jail house. It appears that only one bid was made, by J. W. McCowan for \$1800.00, but it was accepted and the structure completed during 1855.

In March of 1856 plans for a new, more adequate Court House, submitted by George Barnard, were accepted and bids invited. After considerable consultation by Committee a contract was placed with Richard

W. Smith for a sum of \$11,500.00. The City was growing up.

On August 29th, 1856, by an Act of the Texas Legislature, the town of Waco Village was fully and officially incorporated as the City of Waco. The historic name of Waco Village was no more.

Before the close of 1852 Waco had two churches; the Methodist being located on First Street near the Brazos, and the Baptist on Second Street near Jackson. Services had been conducted in the Village since 1849, however, by a Methodist circuit rider, Joseph P. Sneed.

It was in 1861 that an event took place which was to exert a vast influence upon the religious as well as educational life of the young city. That was the year in which Dr. Rufus C. Burleson moved to Waco from Independence and affiliated with a school then being conducted as the Waco Classical School. Dr. Burleson had been president of Baylor University at Independence for over ten years, but upon his removal to Waco with most of his faculty in 1861 he assumed the post of president of the School here, changing the name to Waco University. Baylor at Independence continued on there until 1886, by which time it had declined severely and was moved to Waco to merge with Waco University, dropping the latter name and continuing as Baylor University. After the arrival of the esteemed Dr. Burleson Waco began rapidly to attract

the Baptist population of the State, who removed to Waco to enjoy the association with this distinguished educator of their denomination, and his school.

In 1863 another most historic pastorate was begun in Waco, being that of Presbyterian Dr. Samuel A. King, who occupied his pulpit at the First Presbyterian Church until 1903—a continuous forty years.

During the 1850's the congregations of the city were all compelled to yield many important members, at frequent intervals, to protect the Village and nearby settlements from Indian raids. The Comanches particularly were fond of riding down on the settlements at night, during the "light of the moon," primarily to steal horses, but having little hesitation at committing outrageous murders whenever opportunity was presented. One of the early acts of Waco's Commissioners' Court was the organizing of a Ranger force for the following up and punishment of these Indian marauders, and the dangerous excursions of this Waco militia would of itself make a volume of frontier heroism and adventure. Many of their exploits are recounted in J. W. Wilbarger's remarkable book entitled "Indian Depredations In Texas."

Captain Shapley P. Ross was in command of the Company, and in 1855 he was appointed by the State as Indian Agent, to treat with all the Indian tribes for a permanent peace arrangement.

His efforts were very successful with all except the Comanches, and as that tribe made the choice, it seemed, to "live by the sword," Captain Ross undertook to assure the correct fulfillment of that celebrated Scriptural warning. One of his expeditions against them in 1857 is of special interest. The Comanches had effected an unusually heavy raid on Waco and its vicinity, taking away hundreds of horses, and Captain Ross set out in pursuit at once with a large posse, including over one hundred friendly Indian warriors. The Comanches were slowed by the herd of stolen horses, and Capt. Ross came up with them in a large ravine, where about seventy-five Comanches were shot and 475 horses recovered. The Chief of the Comanche party rode through a very hail of fire, until Capt. Ross with a deliberate aim brought him tumbling from his pony. An examination revealed that the reason for the Chief's seeming invulnerability was that he was wearing a jacket of iron armor, probably taken off one of the early Spanish soldiers years before. Capt. Ross presented the pierced relic to the State Capitol at Austin, where it was destroyed by fire in 1893.

In 1860 another Comanche raiding party was pursued by a body of the Ranger force, led in this instance by L. S. (Sul) Ross, the youthful son of Shapley P. Ross. This chase led far out upon the plains of the

Texas Panhandle, where the Comanches were finally overtaken near the Pease River. During a pitched battle Sul Ross captured one of the Indian band who was found to be a white woman—Cynthia Ann Parker—who had been stolen as a child from her home at Parker's Fort in Limestone County. She had been taken as wife by a Comanche Chief, Peta Nocona, who was shot down by a Mexican attendant of Sul Ross' with a blast of buckshot from his shotgun. These adventures were but little more outstanding than numerous others in which Waco Rangers participated.

During these turbulent years another disturbing question was being carried into the Waco community. This was the cloud "no larger than a man's hand" of Civil War. The embittering disputes over slavery, and news of the troubles in Kansas were drifting southwest. Waco had by 1859 become a community dependent quite largely on the rich plantations of the Brazos Valley, and almost all of her leading citizens were quick to side with the heated agitation for secession from the Union. Waco's population in 1859 numbered 749, but in the County there were 1938 slaves, constituting a property value of at least \$1,000,000. The mention of abolishing an investment of this extent, without remuneration to the investors, was nothing less than fighting talk. The Waco news-

paper, *The Waco Era*, begun in 1854 by Major Robert Lambdin, took a vigorous stand on the secessionist side; but it was the voice and influence of the Waco lawyers and landowners which weighed most heavily upon the opinions of the city. Prominent among the voices for secession were Richard Coke, Thomas Harrison, J. W. Speight, J. F. Davis, J. L. L. McCall, Allison Nelson, and James E. Harrison.

During the historic national campaign of 1860 old General Sam Houston came to Waco and delivered a moving address voicing his firm conviction that Texas should not, must not leave the Union, but his appeal was all in vain. Shortly after the election of the Republican Abraham Lincoln, the State of Texas followed along with her Southern neighbors out of the Union and into the Confederate States of America.

The citizens of Waco had complete confidence in their cause and their ability to win from the United States the independence they had determined to establish. Men dropped their duties in the stores and on the farms, and an estimated 2200 soldiers went out from McLennan County.

It was a popular practice for leading men to organize companies of cavalry or infantry, with themselves as Captain in command. Seventeen such companies rode or marched away from Waco, headed by such men as Richard Coke, Ed D. Ryan (the first organ-

ized), Peter F. Ross, Thomas Harrison, George B. Erath, Marcus D. Herring, James E. Harrison, O. J. Downs, H. G. Granbury, John Stone, W. H. Parsons, N. W. Battle, J. W. Sedberry and John Harrison, the son of James E. Harrison.

Another prominent Waco lawyer, E. J. Gurley, organized a cavalry regiment, the 30th Texas, recruited very largely in the County. Their drill grounds were near Bosqueville, and after a brief training period they rode away to active service. The cavalry Company organized by Thomas Harrison became attached to the famous regiment known as "Terry's Texas Rangers."

Another citizen of Waco whose Civil War career merits particular interest was John C. West, a young schoolmaster, head of the Waco Classical School. West had enlisted in the first Company to be organized, under Ed D. Ryan, but before the Company left the State Private West received an appointment under the provisional Confederate Government, as Western District Attorney. He reluctantly took up these legal duties, but in March, 1862, he again entered the army in a regiment being organized by J. W. Speight. In April he received another appointment as Western District Attorney, this time from the Confederate "Permanent Government," and again he resumed the prosecution of criminals. But he was waging a losing battle with his own conscience, and in April, 1863,

he once more enlisted as a private in his original Company E, Fourth Texas Infantry, and this time departed shortly for fields of action. Action he saw aplenty, arriving in time for the battles of Gettysburg and Chickamauga. Judge West returned to Waco after the War was over, and was a citizen of the highest order until his death in 1927.

It is remarkable to note the honors and the recognition given to the soldiers from Waco during the bitter struggle. No less than six were promoted to the rank of General, these being Thomas Harrison, L. S. Ross, H. C. Granbury, Allison Nelson, James E. Harrison and W. H. Parsons. Four others besides E. J. Gurley became Colonels, these being Richard Coke, J. W. Speight, P. F. Ross and W. A. Taylor. Having thrown her entire resources into the struggle, Waco was left at the War's close in a condition of almost desperate impoverishment. Having, however, been largely spared the destruction of actual battle, her recovery was amazingly rapid.

As the soldiers poured back home into the State a new and epochal enterprise sprang into existence. During the years of war the herds of Texas cattle had run almost untended and the country was full of half-wild unbranded longhorns. Ranchers and cattle buyers commenced to round them up and in the year 1868 was begun the unprecedented operation of driv-

ing vast herds overland from south and central Texas to the railroad terminus towns in Kansas and Nebraska. Several different routes or trails were soon established for the drives, and "going up the trail" became big business for about a decade. Waco lay upon the path of one of the principal trails and saw scores of the strung-out herds moving up to market. Often a herd would be quartered or "bedded down" for the night near Waco and the drivers would ride into town for supplies and recreation. In the morning, boys from Waco would go out to the bedding ground and bring in calves which had been born during the night, but of necessity left behind. These calves were often taught to drink from a bucket and successfully raised. Many well known cattlemen in Waco engaged in the business of gathering herds and taking them up the trail.

As early as 1860 the matter of bringing a railroad into Waco itself had been seriously approached, but the calamity of Civil War put such plans out of reach and mind for years. Before the War the nearest railroad was at Millican, a wagon haul of about a hundred miles from Waco. Shortly after the War the line—the Central Railway—had built on up to Bremond, and a group of influential men of Waco and the County organized a tap railroad company called the Waco and Northwestern Railway, with J. W. Speight

as president. Action was slow, but in 1869 Speight was succeeded as president by Col. John T. Flint, an Austin lawyer and banker who had moved to Waco after the war and established a banking firm known as Flint and Chamberlain. Col. Flint was an excellent example of the Western "Empire Builder."

Construction was now begun at once on the laying of the road, and in 1871 the tap railroad reached East Waco. Boasting the only railroad in the County, the young city's future was indeed encouraging. In that same year of 1871 a disaster shook the town when a fire broke out along the original block of Main Street (now Bridge Street) and aided by high wind soon swept beyond control and consumed every building in the block. As shocking as the fire was, however, it did abolish the old frame and slab buildings which for several years past had been known as Rat Row. New brick buildings soon replaced the old, and the city's growth went on.

Fully as important as the railroad was the completion in 1870 of the historic suspension bridge across the Brazos. Capt. Ross' ferry had grown inadequate for the volume of traffic now heading westward across the river, and in 1866 plans had been set in motion for the new bridge. A company was organized and a charter obtained from the State dated November 1st, 1866. Real progress began on May 8th, 1868, when



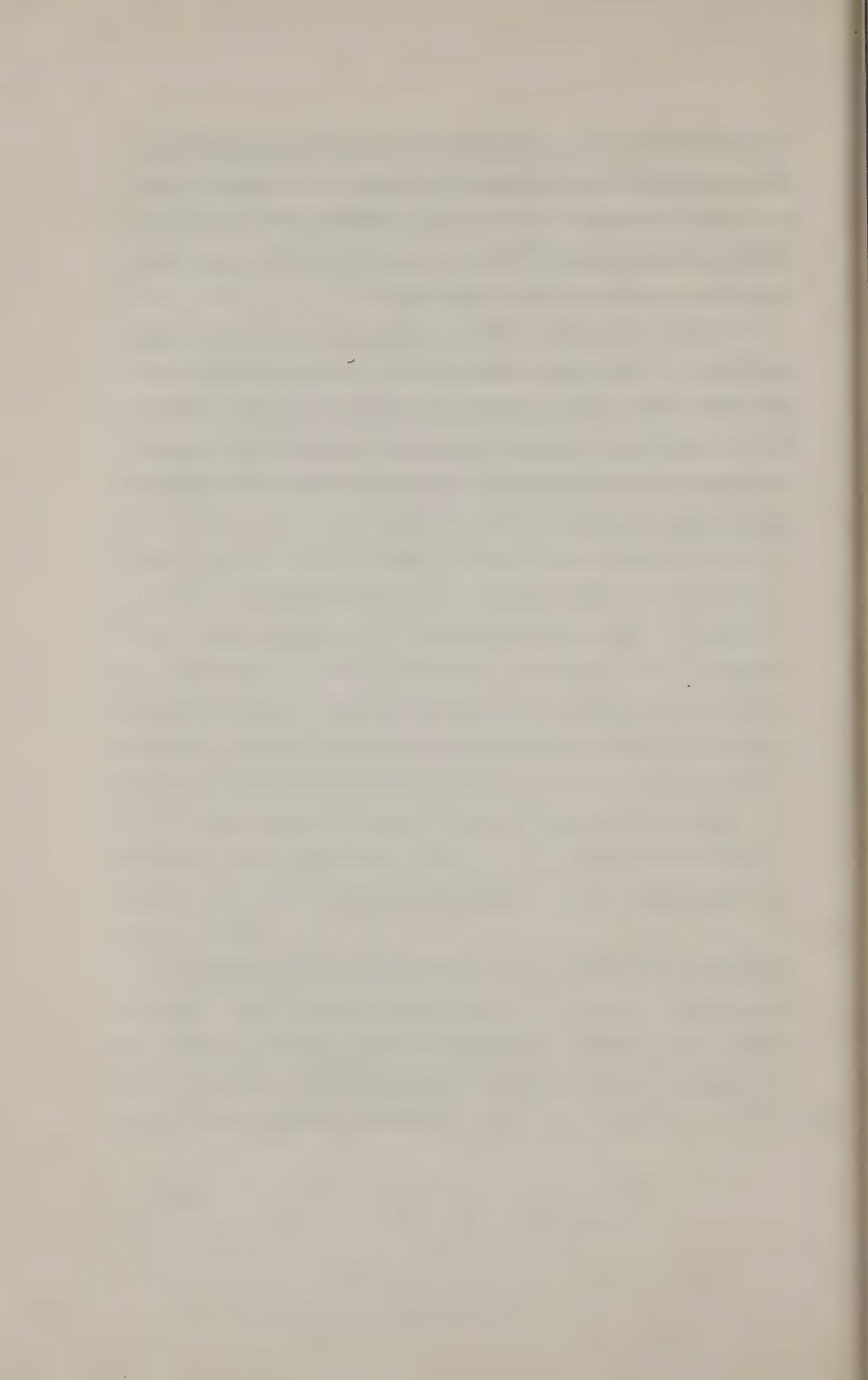
WACO SUSPENSION BRIDGE, AND BRIDGE STREET SCENE, PHOTO 1876

a meeting was held in the banking office of Flint & Chamberlain. Colonel Flint was elected president, D. T. Chamberlain as treasurer and O. J. Downs as secretary. The directors were J. W. Speight, Richard Coke, Dr. D. R. Wallace and W. N. Trice. Other members of the original charter company were J. B. Earle, H. M. Hood, A. J. Buchanan and John M. Burney. A subscription book was opened and by August \$50,000 had been subscribed. It was decided to deal with the celebrated New York firm of A. Roebling Co., who had originated the suspension type bridge, and Colonel Flint was delegated to go to New York personally to handle the transaction. This was satisfactorily accomplished and in October of 1868 the Chief Engineer, Thomas M. Griffith, arrived at Waco and commenced the preliminaries. The shifting, sandy banks made the setting of the piers and anchor houses extremely difficult, but by January, 1869, construction was actually begun in earnest. A contract for bricks was let to J. W. Mann of Waco, and 2,700,000 bricks were used. The total cost ran to \$130,000.

On January 7, 1870, the 475 foot span was officially opened, with great celebration. It was at that time the longest single span suspension bridge the world had ever seen, and for nearly twenty years it took toll from every person crossing.

In 1889 McLennan County, by a bond issue of \$80,000 purchased the historic span from the Bridge Company and conveyed it to the city for the sum of \$1.00 and the consideration that it would be maintained and operated as a free public highway.

Thus in 1871 did Waco arrive, in truth, at her majority. With her railroad an accomplished fact, and with the only bridge across the broad and sandy Brazos, she had indeed progressed beyond her era as a County town, and entered upon the most important stage of her career.



THE INHERITANCE

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THE ten or fifteen years immediately following the completion of the great suspension bridge were in many ways the most important in Waco's history. The town had suddenly become the very hub of a vast migration to the west; and while the railroad terminus had shortly moved on up to Ross, about eleven miles farther north, Waco was by far the principal shipping and receiving station for McLennan County and a large adjacent trading territory. As a natural consequence her streets and stores were busy with the tide of frontier commerce.

Fully equal to or exceeding this progress in the realm of commerce was the city's cultural development; a growth so marked as to earn for Waco a reputation, widely circulated, as "The Athens of Texas."

It was probably the unusual excellence of the private

and denominational schools established in Waco which delayed the development of the public school system. Lawyer N. W. Battles' early private school had been joined or followed by half a dozen others, all of excellent character.

In the year 1857 the Methodist denomination founded in Waco a non-sectarian school for young ladies, naming it Waco Female College. After years of progress and accomplishment this school was closed, due to financial difficulties, and its properties were purchased by a school at Thorp Springs, Texas, conducted by the Christian Church, and known as Ad-Ran College. Ad-Ran was moved to the Waco location and re-organized as Texas Christian University. After a promising career of several years at Waco, the new school was persuaded by Fort Worth to move to that city, where it is still a flourishing institution.

In 1873 the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, from Lockport, N. Y., came to Waco and purchased a site at Eighth and Washington streets from George Barnard, for the erection of the Sacred Heart Academy. This was the first Catholic school established in the State of Texas, and during the construction of the buildings, classes were held first in the Catholic Church at Sixth and Washington and later for several months in a rented residence at Seventh and Washington.

In 1872 the African Methodist Episcopal Church

opened a school for Negroes at Waco, calling it Paul Quinn College, still serving its people today.

Waco Classical School had become Waco University in 1861, when Dr. Rufus C. Burleson moved to Waco with his Baylor faculty from Independence. In 1886 by the move of the old Baylor name and remaining possessions, Waco University became Baylor University at Waco, and the town became in truth the educational center of the entire State.

In 1882 an election was held at Waco to authorize a tax on all City property for the maintenance of free public schools. The measure was adopted by a large majority, and the foundation was thus laid for the City's splendid public school system.

Toward the close of the century another interesting title to grace Waco was "The Geyser City." This name was obtained by the discovery, beneath the town, of an abundant stratum of mineral-charged waters, and within a comparatively short time Waco was in possession of " . . . more overflowing artesian wells than any other city in the world." The pressure was such that the water burst forth from these wells in remarkable volume, and Waco was given extensive advertising as an ideal health resort. Two swimming pools, or natatoriums, were erected, one a frame structure at Padgitt Park on Clay Street, and the other a sizable brick hotel at Fourth and Mary Streets. The

latter, called the Natatorium Hotel, was financed by Colonel R. B. Parrott, and stood until about 1930, when it was destroyed by fire.

Until the year 1904 the water supply for the City had been furnished by a private corporation called the Bell Water Company, which owned a complete underground system of piping and mains, and obtained the water from a plant of artesian wells and shallow tubular wells. In 1904 this water supply came under municipal ownership by the purchase by the City of the private Company's entire system, financed by a bond issue of \$500,000. The principal source of Waco's water today is from a large artificial lake situated about five miles west of the city, and known as Lake Waco. It was completed in 1930 at cost of approximately two million dollars.

Numerous other sounding titles were bestowed upon the city through the years, including the long popular "City With a Soul," and the present "Heart of Texas." Another of less complimentary nature but of equal interest was acquired during the turbulent reconstruction days and following the opening of the big bridge. This title was "Six Shooter Depot." The close of the Civil War brought westward a host of settlers and drifters, among whom were many men—some bad and some good—who were equally "sudden and quick in quarrel." The youthful town had its

customary share, or more, of saloons and gaming houses, doing a flourishing business. An anecdote is told of one of the city's prominent lawyers, one of the ex-Confederate Generals, who was seen coming out of a popular saloon by a lady friend and member of his same church. When she promptly expressed her shock at seeing the Judge coming out of so notorious an establishment, his reply was that it was surely better to be seen coming out than to be seen going in.

On a July evening in 1878 the legendary Sam Bass and gang stopped in at Waco's Ranch Saloon for a round of drinks, which Bass paid for out of an 1877 "double eagle." The gold piece, significantly, was the last of three thousand like it which the Bass gang had taken in a train robbery the year before at Big Springs, Nebraska. Bass was considering robbing a bank at Waco, but apparently impressed by the quality or quantity of the Waco police, he decided to ride on down to Round Rock instead. There he rode into a trap set by the vigilant Texas Rangers and met his death.

The reconstruction era brought angry passions to the surface on a number of occasions at Waco. In one instance during a lawsuit over a contested will a threat was made against the life of Colonel E. J. Gurley, one of the lawyers in the case. Colonel Gurley, shortly away from his service in the war, laid his pair of Colt

"forty-fours" on the table before him upon entering the courtroom, and a friend similarly armed took a seat behind him, facing the audience. There was no disturbance in the court that day.

This same lawsuit was a hold-over from a dispute which had arisen just before the outbreak of the war, one particularly heated day of which had ended in an exchange of "about thirty or forty shots," none fatal.

Another, and perhaps the most remarkable episode of this nature, was the closing up of the Waco gambling houses by Judge G. B. Gerald. Judge Gerald was a native of Mississippi, who had served gallantly in the Civil War, had commanded the 18th Mississippi Regiment at Gettysburg, and been severely wounded four different times. He came to Waco in 1869 and later on served two terms as County Judge. Shortly after his election he sent for the Sheriff one morning, and inquired as to what had been done about stopping the public gambling in Waco, as had been specifically promised during the Judge's election race. When the Sheriff gave him an unsatisfactory answer Judge Gerald dismissed the Court, buckled on his pistol belt and went directly to the city's most popular gambling house, located on South Fourth Street. It being morning the place was locked up, but Judge Gerald promptly kicked the door inward and entered. The establish-

ment was upstairs, and the Judge threw out of a window all of the smaller furnishings, then broke the larger pieces into bits and threw them out also. Going next to the office of the evening newspaper he gave them an article for publication detailing what he had just done, and promising like treatment to any other gambling house choosing to open that night. None of them did open that night, or thereafter during Judge Gerald's administration.

A further manifestation of Judge Gerald's character and abilities came only a short time after this episode of the gambling house. A serious dispute had arisen between the Judge and two Harris brothers engaged in the publishing business in Waco. A three-sided pistol duel took place at Fourth and Austin Streets with a Harris on either side of Austin and Judge Gerald between. When the deadly fusillade had ceased one Harris lay dead, the other dying, and Judge Gerald's left arm was shattered, necessitating its removal.

The newspapers of Waco exercised important influence in the community since its pioneer days. Waco's first paper was called the Waco Era, begun in the year 1854 by Major Robert Lambdin. The Era became one of the active voices in favor of secession, and was joined in 1860 by an even more fiery sheet called The Southwest, published by W. H. Parsons, who later became one of Waco's six Confederate

Generals. Parsons was reputed to be a very brilliant writer.

In the year 1865 a man named W. R. Chase, of obvious courage, entered the Waco field with a "Republican weekly paper" named The Register. In 1867 J. W. Downs began an equally staunch "Democrat Semi-Weekly" called The Examiner.

The first daily paper was begun in the 1870's by J. W. Golledge, who called it the Waco Daily Advance. This paper marked the beginning in Waco of the newer reportorial style of news transmittal.

During the 1880's the Waco Day, under able management of A. R. McCollum, took the ascendancy, joined during this period by the Waco Evening News. Early in the 1890's these two papers were joined by the Daily Globe and the Evening Telephone, giving Waco four daily newspapers.

In the year 1897 George Robinson and C. J. Glover established the Waco Times-Herald, a morning paper, and in 1901 this firm bought the Evening Telephone which they continued to publish until 1903, when it was discontinued and the Times-Herald was made an evening paper.

The Waco Morning News was started in 1911 by a Mr. Tupper, from San Angelo, Texas. This paper changed hands several times before it was bought in 1916 by E. S. Fentress.

In 1917 the Waco Daily Tribune was begun by J. M. Pitillo and the veteran A. R. McCollum, but in November of the same year this paper was also purchased by E. S. Fentress and merged with the Morning News. In 1927 Mr. Fentress also acquired the venerable Times-Herald, thus gaining both the principal papers of Waco.

Around 1890 there were several other commendable journals and magazines published in Waco, at least one of which is deserving of some special attention. In 1894 a peculiarly gifted writer named William Cowper Brann moved to Waco—"The Athens of Texas"—and began, or rather resumed publication of a monthly magazine he called "Brann's Iconoclast." The word iconoclast means literally "idol breaker" and in his magazine Brann publicly attacked and ridiculed such persons, institutions and things as he chose to judge to be false, bigoted or hypocritical. His literary ability, in the realm of satire and invective, was admittedly superb, and within the span of only two or three years his magazine had attained a national circulation. Brann had numerous friends and supporters in Waco, including stern, fiery Judge G. B. Gerald, but as a matter of course he had also made a great many bitter enemies. With the passing of time his verbal attacks grew increasingly caustic, and as several threats

had been made against his life, Brann went armed constantly.

Destiny, it might be said, caught up with Brann on the afternoon of April 1st, 1898. As he walked down South Fourth Street, between Austin and Franklin, accompanied by his business manager, W. H. Ward, a citizen named Tom E. Davis stepped from a real estate office door behind him and fired a shot from a forty-five caliber Colt revolver into Brann's back, "directly where the suspenders crossed." Almost simultaneously with the heavy report, Brann whirled with his own revolver drawn and deliberately emptied it at Davis, four of the shots taking deadly effect. Davis was carried into a nearby office while officers, not realizing the fatal nature of Brann's wound, hustled the editor to the police station; but as he was being led into the building it was noticed that blood "was sloshing out of his shoes." Brann died at one o'clock that night, while Davis lived until the following day. Once again the frontier Judge Colt had closed one of the community's most controversial cases. Brann's paper was continued for a short time by his widow, and then abandoned.

In 1894 the civic leaders of Waco banded together for the launching of an unusually ambitious Fair and Exposition which they named The Texas Cotton Palace. A large auditorium was erected in Padgitt Park



DIRECTORS OF FIRST COTTON PALACE: Left to right, first row: ED SPARKS, WALSTEIN BOWMAN, LEWINE PLUNKETT, ED ROTAN, W. A. POAGE, RUSSELL KINGSBURY. Second row: JIM I. MOORE, JAMES B. BAKER, SAM SANGER, S. W. SLAYDEN, JESSE McLENDON, H. H. SHEAR. Third row: C. C. McCULLOCH, WATT CAUFIELD, OSCAR FORSGARD, COL. R. B. PARROTT, W. W. SELEY, BART MOORE. (1894)

at Fifteenth and Clay streets, and in the Fall of 1894 the first Exposition was held with great success. Just six months later, however, a fire completely destroyed the auditorium and the Cotton Palace was discontinued until 1909. In that year it was taken up by the Young Men's Business League, a newly organized and crusading civic group, and with a capital of \$60,000.00 they had raised the Cotton Palace was reconstructed and again opened. For a quarter century it was the outstanding Fair of the Southwest, and its social functions—the Queen's Ball and Society Ball—were high spots in the City's social calendar. The depression of the early 1930's, together with the changes and advances in other fields of entertainment, combined to bring the historic Cotton Palace to a close.

The generosity of the family of William Cameron, pioneer lumber merchant of Waco, gave to the city the beautiful Park which bears the Cameron name. The original gift consisted of about one hundred acres located around the popular picnic grounds of Proctor Springs, near Fifth and Herring Avenue. The Park was enlarged by additional donations to its present size of five hundred acres. The Edward Rotan family donated the scenic river drive along the sandy Brazos, thus connecting the downtown area with Cameron Park.

Before 1903 Waco had no paved or hard-surfaced

streets whatsoever, even the principal thoroughfares being simply graveled. The problem of dust was constant, especially in summer, and a fleet of sprinkler wagons was kept busy throughout the day and sometimes at night as well. Wet weather, on the other hand, brought another problem, and on January 1, 1903, the city government found it necessary to bring in from the county their road grading machinery for the purpose of removing enough of the mud collected on Austin Avenue to permit pedestrian traffic to continue. It is stated that at every intersection on Austin Avenue, from Eighth Street to the City Square, the mud was fully ankle deep. Paving of all the principal streets was commenced that year.

The year 1910 marked another attainment for the city. In August of that year ground was broken at the corner of Fifth and Austin for erection of the Amicable Life Insurance Building, twenty-two stories in height and for a number of years the tallest building in the state of Texas. The construction work attracted keenest interest as the steel framework crept skyward, and just a little more than a year later, in October, 1911, the building was completed. During the foundation work a splendid artesian well had been tapped, rendering the Amicable Building independent of outside sources for its water. Following up this beginning, the building owners installed an independent

electric generating system for lights and power, and a steam heating system, using for fuel crude petroleum from their own company-owned wells in the western section of McLennan County.

A sidelight of interest is that after the Amicable Building had struck its artesian well, a well-known cafe directly across Austin Avenue became desirous of securing the excellent water for its own use, and made necessary arrangements with the Amicable owners. The City, however, did not want to permit the necessary ditch to be dug across Austin Avenue, so the Amicable engineers devised a remarkable plan. Digging first a pit beneath the cafe they next began from the Amicable Building and drilled a pipe-line horizontally beneath the street level and connected exactly with their "target" on the opposite side of Austin Avenue. This cafe, Chris', is still in operation today.

It is significant that in the realm of Texas politics it has for many years been considered a choice of good luck or wisdom to open a campaign in Waco. This sentiment dates back to the political days of Richard Coke, Waco's celebrated reconstruction Governor of Texas. Waco is the State's only city to have furnished three Governors, these being Coke, L. S. (Sul) Ross, and Pat M. Neff.

The City's splendid progress in recent years, particularly in the field of industry and commerce, are

evident on every side today; but it is well for Wacoans to pause and consider for a brief moment the heritage of their City. In the year 1900 Dr. Samuel A. King, nearing his fortieth year as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Waco, delivered to his congregation an especially inspiring sermon on a text entitled "The New Century and the Open Door." From his pulpit Dr. King had seen the city's growth and progress since its days as a frontier village, and to his congregation he gave the following charge and challenge: "You are the heirs of a glorious heritage, and to you has come a responsibility as honorable as it is mighty. . . . And may the century just past, glorious and notable as it has been, be but the open vestibule of a nobler and grander future."

BIOGRAPHIES

VI

NEILL McLENNAN, SR.

McLENNAN COUNTY was formed in 1850 from parts of the Counties of Milam and Robertson. Neill McLennan, Sr., was the first settler in that portion taken from Milam County, and the first settler in the portion taken from Robertson County was George Barnard. The name of McLennan was selected for the new County.

Neill McLennan, Sr., was born in the celebrated Highlands of Scotland in the year 1777. He was of adventurous and daring spirit from his youth and in 1801 he emigrated to America with two brothers, Laughlin and John McLennan, with their families, settling in the State of North Carolina. There they farmed successfully and happily until 1816. In that year Neill McLennan, Sr., with one companion, made



NEILL McLENNAN, SR.

Reproduced from daguerreotype owned by Miss Verdi McLennan

an exploring trip into the semi-tropical Spanish territory of Florida, where he became pleased with the country and decided to settle and clear land. His family joined him and in Florida they remained until 1835. That was the year the decision was made to come to Texas.

They had received many reports and tales of that vast inviting land, and when a mutual decision was made to go to Texas the three McLennan brothers and their families with one other family named Robinson, purchased a small sailing schooner at Pensacola, Florida, and set sail westward, loaded with their household belongings. Luck was with the amateur sailors and without accident the little vessel arrived at the mouth of the Brazos, up which stream the voyage was continued to Fort Bend County. There the craft was disposed of and wagons obtained, by which conveyance the party proceeded overland to a site on Pond Creek in Robertson's Colony, where they again settled down.

In the bloody year of 1836 tragedy befell the McLennan family with a heavy hand. Laughlin McLennan was killed by a volley of Indian arrows as he worked in his woods lot, splitting rails for a new fence; and brother John fell victim also to a treacherous Indian ambush near the Robertson settlement of Nashville on the Brazos.

It was in 1839 that Neill McLennan, Sr., first set eyes upon the Bosque River valley he later loved so well. In that year he rode up the Brazos on a scouting and surveying tour with his friend George B. Erath. Reaching the mouth of the Bosque (Spanish for "woods") they turned up that stream for a considerable distance and McLennan was so taken by the richness of the land, the beauty of the pecan groves, and the climatic attractiveness of the rolling hills and valleys he prevailed upon Erath to survey several tracts of land for him on the South Bosque.

In the year 1845 he again loaded up his belongings and moved up the river and onto the Bosque valley land he had selected. Once again his devoted relatives followed him into the new country, taking up farm homes near him. Their worthy descendants are prominent citizens of the County to this day.

The picturesque double log cabin of Neill McLennan, Sr., on the South Bosque, with its airy "dog trot" hallway down the center, was a famous landmark and favored resting place for many years. There the brave old pioneer lived out his remaining life span in peace and dignity. He was very prominent in the early community life of Waco, and was called upon so often to assist in making land surveys he eventually became a first-rate surveyor in his own right. In

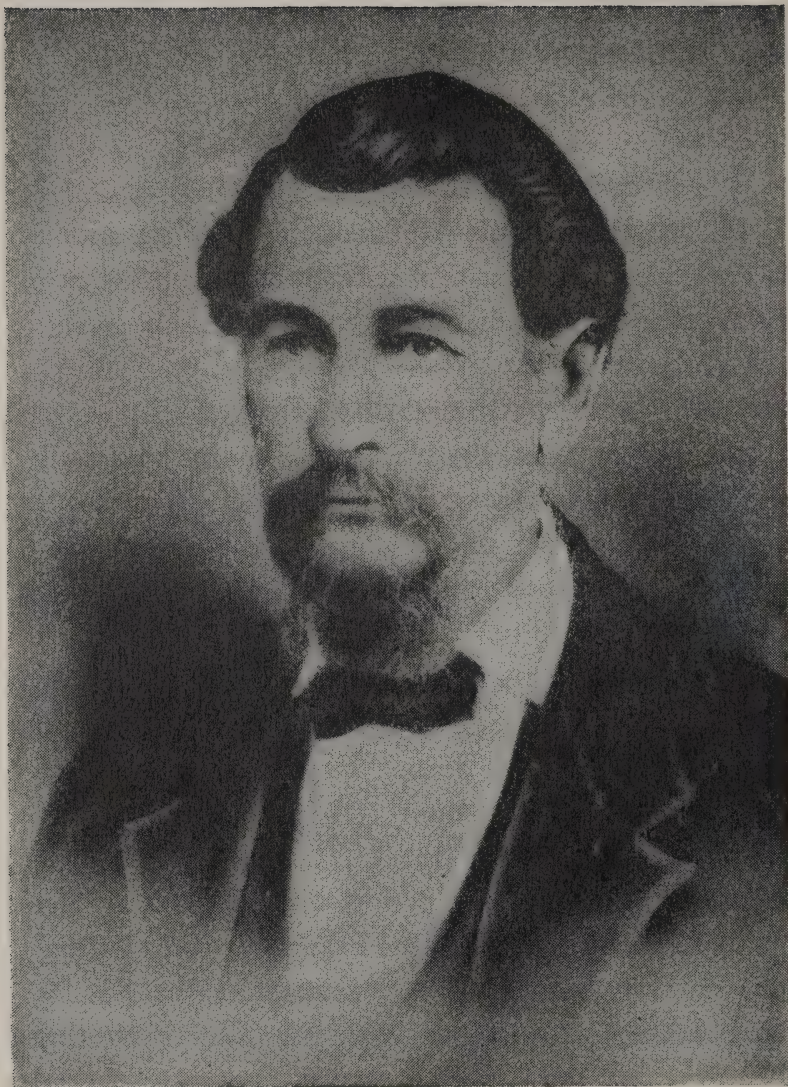
the year 1867 death came to the sturdy old pioneer, then in his ninety-first year.

GEORGE BARNARD

A MODEST street in northwest Waco today bears the name of this remarkable Waco pioneer. It would be appropriate if a far more imposing monument be erected by the citizens of Waco to the memory of George Barnard.

It was in 1845 that Neill McLennan, Sr., moved up the Brazos, from the Nashville Colony, and settled on South Bosque in that portion of McLennan County then known as Milam. George Barnard had settled in the portion then called Robertson County, a few miles south, in 1844.

Barnard was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in the year 1818. His character and ability were a fitting tribute to that native State. He was twenty years of age when he took voyage for the interesting new Republic of Texas. Landing at Galveston he worked there for a rather short period, choosing to move on up to Houston. Subsequent events proved this move to be most fortunate, for it was in Houston that Barnard became acquainted with the Torrey brothers, David, John and Thomas, who were successful operators of frontier trading posts. Barnard was just the kind of man the Torreys were looking for also.



GEORGE BARNARD

Photo courtesy Baylor Texas Collection

Before making his eventful connection with the Torreys, however, Barnard experienced an unexpectedly extended adventure which very nearly cost his life. He was a member of the historic but ill-fated Texas expedition to Santa Fe. This expedition was made up mainly of traders taking ox-wagon loads of goods for commerce with the citizens of the prosperous Mexican border town of Santa Fe; but escorting this body were five Companies of Texas Mounted Infantrymen and a Company of Artillery. Barnard was enrolled as a Corporal of the Artillery. Among the buffalo hunters making the journey was Thomas Torrey. The caravan was assembled on Brushy Creek, near Austin, and got under way in June of 1841.

Reports of the impressive expedition reached the ears of the authorities across the border, who promptly looked upon it, reasonably enough, with suspicion and concern. Long before the caravan arrived at Santa Fe nature had conspired to exhaust and demoralize the Texas force, and when within only a short distance from the destination they fell victim to a clever piece of treachery and were taken prisoner by the Mexican militia. From there they were forced to march afoot to the City of Mexico, and later to Vera Cruz, under the severest conditions. For a while George Barnard was shackled by the leg to another prisoner who was suffering from small-pox. This man died, but Bar-

nard somehow escaped the infection. The constant exposure and neglect crippled him with rheumatism, necessitating his use of a cane all the remainder of his life. After nine months imprisonment he was finally released, at Vera Cruz, from where he made his way back to Houston. Many more months were required for the recovery of his health.

It was spring of 1843 that Barnard purchased a working interest in the Torrey trading firm. That spring he made a scouting trip far up the Brazos with Thomas Torrey, on the lookout for favorable locations for additional trading posts, and a site was selected on a bluff overlooking a small tributary of Tehuacana Creek, about eight miles below the ancient Waco village. This small stream is still known as Trading House Creek.

On the return trip down the Brazos Thomas Torrey fell ill of a fever and died, and another year elapsed before George Barnard came back to the selected spot in the Tehuacana bottoms.

His stock of goods was brought along in a train of ox wagons and by this same method the bales of furs and skins were later freighted out to Houston. Game was almost incredibly abundant and the Indians of the region were quick to respond to the easy opportunity of supplying themselves with the luxuries of civilization.

Deer hides came in by the thousands, and other skins in similar abundance. The Tehuacana Indians were principal patrons, but Barnard also had dealings with the Wacos, Cherokees and a band of Delawares. His constant fairness gave all the Indians great confidence in him, and he was called upon every now and then by the Rangers to intercede or arbitrate certain matters with the various Indian tribes. In 1848 Barnard bought out the Torrey Brothers' interest in his store for \$9,500, approximately one-half the inventory value.

In 1849 the surveyor George B. Erath and his associate Jacob de Cordova came up to lay out a new townsite on the Chambers grant at the Waco Spring. George Barnard was among those present when the first lots in Waco Village were put on sale, and was allowed the purchase of Lot One in Block One, now Bridge Street. On this lot he put up a new trading house and moved his stock in from the Tehuacana. The old post stood for many years, finally being destroyed by fire sometime after 1900. Its location was inside the famous Tomas de La Vega eleven-league grant which figured prominently in Waco court proceedings in later years.

At his new location in Waco Village, Barnard's business prospered and he entered actively into every phase of the civic life and development of the new

town. Preserved today in the Baylor Texas Library are the record books of Barnard's daily business transactions, done in his own fine handwriting. His customers included all the pioneer names—Erath, McLennan, de Cordova, Coke, Battle, Barron, Blocker, Davis, Gurley, Jones, Puckett, Ross and many more.

The old records make the interesting revelation also that George Barnard had a most expensive taste in the matter of personal apparel. The coats, vests and trousers he ordered for himself out of the Eastern markets were two or three times costlier than the stock he regularly carried for sale to his Waco customers.

In 1850 he attained a signal honor by winning as his bride Miss Mary Rebecca Ross, a daughter of his distinguished fellow townsman, Captain Shapley Ross.

A Masonic Lodge was organized in the Village in 1852 and George Barnard was a charter member. It was known as Bosque Lodge, but after a few years this name was officially changed to Waco Lodge Number 92. A two-story hall was constructed on Bridge Street, and for years it held the distinction as the only two-story structure in the town. The disastrous fire of 1871 carried the hall away along with the entire block of frame and log shanties referred to by then

as Rat Row. Barnard's records reveal that in 1853 he ordered from New York a set of jewels for the Lodge, and he later served it as its ninth Master.

Barnard was active with the Company of Mounted Rangers who patrolled the community, and in March of 1856 he submitted plans to the County Commissioners for a new Court House. These plans were accepted.

It was in 1857 that he decided to dispose of his mercantile business and in that year he sold it out to a firm named Fox and Jacobs.

The Barnard home grounds on the north side of the town were exceptionally attractive. One house which George Barnard erected on this property was undoubtedly the very earliest local example of prefabrication. He purchased it in Hartford, Connecticut, and shipped it to Waco, where it was reassembled quite successfully. The grounds were surrounded by a high palisade fence, and in the enclosed park a number of tame deer grazed. A daughter of George Barnard is still living in 1945 on a portion of this original Barnard property, bought in the year 1850. Respected and honored by all who knew him, George Barnard passed away in Waco on March 6th, 1883.

GEORGE B. ERATH

THE City of Waco might well be named "Erath" instead. No one man had more to do with its creation than did George B. Erath.

This truly remarkable man was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1813, the son of a prosperous tanner. He was given the advantage of a splendid education, and in later years he stated that even as a boy he dreamed of travels in foreign lands and in preparation devoted unusual attention to the study of languages. He became fluent in English, French, Spanish and Italian, in addition to his native tongue.

When Erath was fourteen his father died. His mother was anxious that the boy avoid the compulsory conscription into the Austrian army, to which he was subject at sixteen, and the year following his father's death she obtained a permit and passport for him to visit some relatives in Germany. He remained there for a year, during which time his mother remarried, and the boy determined to try to make his way to America.

Austrian law forbade emigration of her young men, but Erath was already out of Austria, and an influential German friend suggested the possibility of getting him across the German border, acting as one of the retinue of some gentleman travelling by private



MAJOR GEORGE B. ERATH

carriage, with a passport. Such an arrangement was effected with a German colonel having business in France and with this officer's party Erath crossed over the Rhine into France, where at Strasburg he was granted a French passport. He journeyed on to Havre, where he took passage for America, landing at the port of New Orleans.

Young Erath did not remain long at New Orleans, but traveled on up the Mississippi to Cincinnati, then to Florence, Alabama, at both of which places he obtained employment in tannery establishments. He saved some money, and in 1833, at just about the time of his twentieth birthday he came out to the renowned province of Texas, landing at Brazoria. His remaining funds were getting short, being sufficient for the purchase of a stout little Spanish pony with a rope halter, but no saddle. He set out bareback for Austin's colony at San Felipe, where he was able to earn enough money to secure a saddle.

In the Fall of 1834 he secured a job as a chain carrier with a surveyor working in Robertson County, and his aptitude and industry soon earned promotion. Within a year young Erath was a qualified surveyor in his own right.

In 1835 his progress in this field was interrupted by an outbreak of bitter Indian warfare through the settlements, in which Erath enlisted actively. Mustered

into service with the Texas army he saw active service against the Mexicans as well, and was with the vengeful Texas riflemen in the historic battle of San Jacinto in 1836. He was now as much a Texan as any, having fought with her for independence.

At the time of the opening of the Texas general land office in 1838 Erath organized a surveying company of his own, but was required to devote the larger portion of his time to the urgent but unremunerative business of Indian war. In 1842 he accompanied a body of Texans to the Mexican town of Mier, in an attempt to aid some Texans being held captive. This expedition ended in disaster for most of the body who were also captured by the Mexican militia at Mier, but Erath had been kept in camp by an illness the morning the Texans entered the town, and was able to make his escape, together with a few of the camp guards.

From 1842 to 1845 he served in the Congress of the Texas Republic, and in 1846 was elected to its first State Legislature. His principal vocation still was that of a successful surveyor.

In 1845 he married Miss Lucinda Chalmers at the town of Nashville on the Brazos. In the year 1849, as surveyor for the owners of the Thos. J. Chambers land grant located at the site of the old Waco Indian spring on the Brazos, Erath located and laid out the

new town of Waco Village. For several years past, during his scouts and travels, he had viewed this locality with special favor, feeling, he afterwards stated, that it would some day be the site of a city of importance. With the laying out of Waco Village he chose to make the new community his home.

At the outbreak of the Civil War Erath promptly raised a Company of Infantry and joined with the 15th Texas Regiment under Col. J. W. Speight. However, his health declined very seriously, and after only a few months of army life he was compelled to return home to recuperate. Here he was soon appointed Major of the Ranger force organized for protection of the frontier, and though ailing, he forced himself to almost constant service with the Rangers. Many times he had to be helped into his saddle.

This additional service combined to make Major Erath more familiar with the geography of central and northern Texas than any other living man, and this knowledge, combined with his reputation for unswerving honesty, caused him to be called upon constantly in matters of land dispute. It is said that Erath's opinion was often preferred to a suit at law, and he became referred to as "the walking dictionary of the Texas Land Office."

After the war, and with the passing of the Indian frontier, Major Erath retired to his modest farm on

the South Bosque, some eight miles west of Waco, with the declared intention of spending the remainder of his years cultivating and improving his acres. But his reputation was far too wide to allow any such retreat, and his services were in more or less constant demand as a surveyor or counsel.

This colorful life came to a close on May 13, 1891. The "Flying Dutchman" had passed on. His name and career should be familiar to every resident of the City he so largely helped to found.

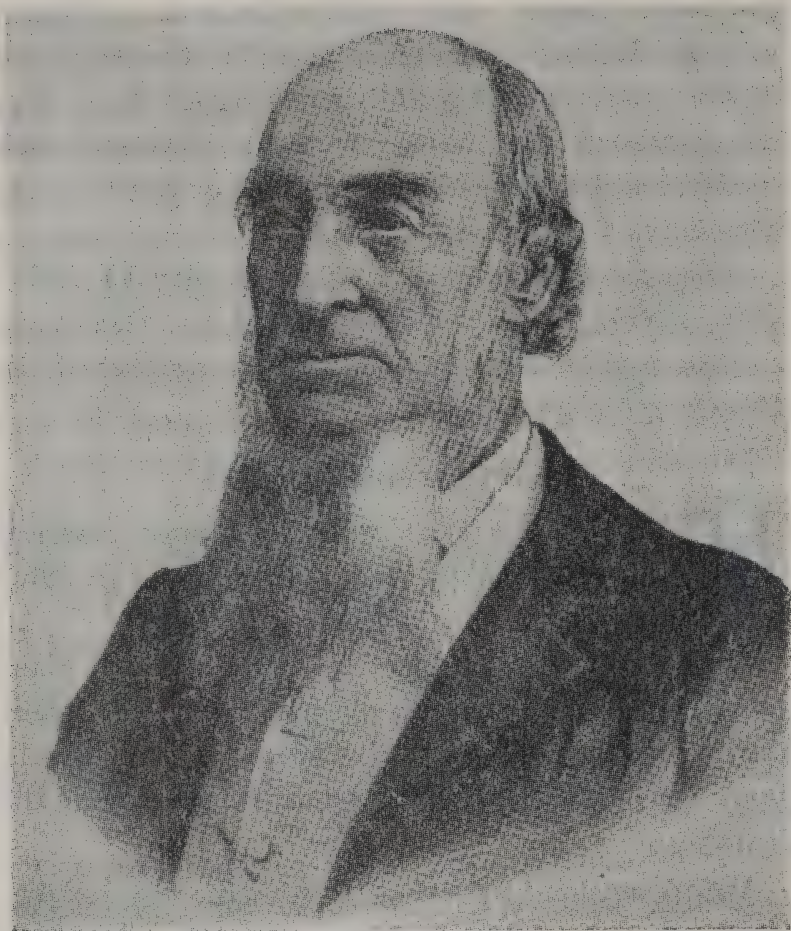
SHAPLEY PRINCE ROSS

HERE indeed was one of Texas' greatest pioneers. The City of Waco may well be proud to number Shapley Prince Ross among her founders.

Ross was born in the year 1811 on the family plantation six miles from Louisville, Kentucky. His father died when Shapley was twelve years old, and the old home was broken up and the estate divided among the heirs.

Before reaching the age of twenty the boy had become adept at trading in horses and other livestock, showing early signs of the remarkable energy and ability so well demonstrated in his later life. He married early, uniting in 1830 with Miss Katherine Fulkerson, the daughter of a distinguished Missouri family.

For several years they lived in Missouri and Iowa,



CAPTAIN SHAPLEY P. ROSS

where Ross branched out into the field of hotel operation and the establishment of Indian trading posts. From 1834 to 1839 he lived on a splendid farm on the Des Moines River, and it was there that two sons were born, Peter and Lawrence Sullivan (Sul) Ross, both of whom were later colorful citizens of Waco and of Texas. It was in 1839 that a physician recommended to Shapley Ross that he remove to a more southern climate and the decision was made to come down into the Republic of Texas.

Their first habitation in Texas was at Robertson's colony of Nashville on the Brazos, where a citizen named Neill McLennan administered to Shapley Ross the oath of allegiance to the Republic. After but a brief stay at Nashville the Ross family and several others moved out to a new location on Little River, near the present town of Cameron. This settlement was about thirty-five miles beyond the older communities and there was constant danger from the hostile Indians. Here Ross laid the corner stone for his future unequalled reputation as an Indian fighter.

In 1845, being desirous that his children have the advantage of higher education, Ross sold his property on Little River and moved to the City of Austin. Here his talents were soon discovered and he was appointed Captain of a Company of Mounted Rangers organized for defense of the frontier settlements. He

soon became exceptionally successful in treating with the Texas Indian tribes for the establishment and maintenance of peaceful relations, but whenever the olive branch was unavailing he was fully as accomplished with his rifle and revolver. Ross was in the field with his force of Rangers when in 1849 a singular opportunity was presented to him.

That was the year that Jacob de Cordova, an outstanding Texas land agent, and one of the owners of the Waco Village site, called on Ross and offered him some most attractive inducements to move to the proposed new townsite and establish a ferry service across the Brazos. The offer consisted of four free city lots and permission to select an additional eighty acres of farming lots at the reasonable figure of \$1.00 per acre, all of which Captain Ross elected to accept. When surveyor George B. Erath laid off the lots, Shapley Ross was promptly on hand, and he even purchased an additional two hundred acres of the farming lots at the regular price of \$2.50 an acre.

No one man was more active in all the phases of the early life of Waco. He lost no time in getting the ferry constructed and running, and it served to make the young Village the very hub of all the westbound traffic across the sandy Brazos. Ross also assumed management of a hotel on the principal street (now Bridge Street), doing an excellent business. He was appointed

as the first official postmaster of the town, and was said to carry the postoffice on his head. He wore a tall beaver hat, known as a bee-gum hat, and he often carried letters around under the crown of this hat, delivering them to their owners as he met them on the street.

In 1850, at the time of the organization of the new County of McLennan, he was made one of the first County Commissioners. When Bosque Masonic Lodge was organized in 1852 Ross was a charter member. This Lodge was later changed to Waco Lodge Number 92.

In 1852 another daughter was born to the Ross family. This was Kate Ross, the first white child born in Waco. Kate Ross in later life became Mrs. Tom Padgitt.

In the deadly field of Indian war Shapley Ross continued to gain renown. In 1855 he was appointed Indian Agent by the State of Texas, to attempt to effect a treaty of peace with all the Texas tribes. Ross' efforts were uniformly successful with all the tribes but one—the Comanches. These fierce Bedouins of the plains had sworn uncompromising war against the advancing whites and harried the settlements unceasingly with their raids.

In 1857 occurred one of the outstanding of Capt. Ross' battles with the Comanches. An unusually

heavy raid had been made upon the Waco region, taking away hundreds of horses. Ross immediately set out on the trail after gathering a force of about a hundred friendly Indian warriors. They were joined by a Company of United States regulars under a Capt. Ford, and were not long in overtaking the Comanches, who were hampered by their herd of stolen horses. The battle took place in a rocky ravine, the Comanches putting up a fanatic defense. When more than seventy-five of them had been killed, the Comanche Chief singled out Capt. Ross and rode through a very hail of shot and arrows to make a direct charge upon him. Ross jumped off his horse and stood with leveled rifle until the Chief was well in range before he pulled the trigger, bringing the courageous enemy tumbling to the ground, dead.

Examination of the seemingly charmed red man revealed that under his shirt he was wearing a jacket of iron armor, a relic no doubt, from a Spanish soldier killed upon the plains of Texas years before. This interesting trophy was removed and presented by Shapley Ross to the State Capitol, where it was unfortunately lost in a disastrous fire in the nineties.

When the passing of the frontier lessened the necessity for constant Ranger service, Ross continued to be a leader in the civic life of Waco and the County. His

family likewise was carrying on the tradition of service and accomplishment.

The old Ross home, just to the south of the town, was set amidst a spreading grove of trees and was the scene of many joyous affairs in the young town's social life.

It was among these peaceful surroundings that death came, on September 17, 1889, to Shapley Prince Ross.

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